



Central Intelligence Agency  
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

8 September 1986

NOTE TO: Director, DCI-DDCI Executive Staff

*Jim*

Attached is a memo prepared by [redacted]  
[redacted] SOVA at the request of Ron St.

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Martin, director of NSC's Crisis Management Center. It is a useful memo and you may want to show it to the DCI. Obviously the Daniloff incident (which is cited on the last page) has moved so rapidly that if we were doing the memo today, we would recast it.

[redacted]

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Richard J. Kerr  
Deputy Director for Intelligence

Attachment:  
As stated

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5 September 1986

## MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: What Would Cause Gorbachev Not to Come to a 1986 Summit?

The Soviets probably have not made a final decision on committing to a summit in 1986.

- In his June letter to the President, Gorbachev spoke of preparations for a possible summit, but made clear that further substantive movement was necessary before a date could be set. Similarly, in his last public statement on 18 August, Gorbachev cited the possibility of a summit this year but seemingly conditioned it on movement on nuclear testing.
- The early August meeting of US and Soviet arms control experts in Moscow probably went poorly from Moscow's perspective, leaving the impression that Washington was not willing to offer further concessions on key issues such as SDI, leaving the Kremlin uncertain as to Washington's underlying flexibility.
- In late August discussions with Japanese officials, senior Soviet officials, including Deputy Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh, emphasized the need for concrete substance for a second summit and that a final Soviet decision on timing would depend on the Shultz-Shevernadze outcome.

[redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] senior levels of the Soviet 25X1  
bureaucracy are divided on the issue.

- [redacted] supports Moscow's public line that more 25X1  
substantive movement on key arms control issues is necessary before a  
summit can be arranged but portrays some unspecified elements of the  
Kremlin hierarchy as seeing substantial political gain in a second  
summit.
- [redacted] other circles of the Soviet bureaucracy 25X1  
are arguing that nothing is likely to be achieved with the current US  
administration and that a summit would only serve to aid the

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President in defending his defense and arms control policies against congressional and Allied critics.

On balance, it appears that those Soviets favoring continued probing of US flexibility with a view to a near-term summit have Gorbachev's ear. In this regard, the Soviets are no doubt keenly attuned to signs of possible divisions within the Administration on arms control issues and the summit's potential agenda.

- While Soviet press commentary highlighting these alleged divisions cannot be taken at face value, there are enough indications from private comments, [redacted] internal Soviet public discussions of the state of US-Soviet relations to suggest that the Soviets take seriously the issue of potential divisions in Washington.

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Such a judgment on Soviet perceptions, if accurate would support the argument that the Soviets see particular value in another face-to-face meeting between the President and Secretary-Gorbachev and therefore might agree to a summit even if the agenda did not promise in advance to yield a significant compromise on arms control.

- There are inherent risks in such a strategy, however, since a second summit devoid of significant movement on SDI, NST or other major issues might make Gorbachev appear to be the supplicant in the arms control dialogue which, in turn, might strengthen the Administration's hand in maintaining domestic and Allied consensus behind its Soviet policy. Additionally, it could leave Gorbachev vulnerable to the sort of domestic political carping that followed the November summit with potentially adverse consequences for his ongoing efforts to maintain the momentum of his ambitious program of economic modernization and "cadre renewal".

Moreover, if the Soviets do perceive bureaucratic frictions in Washington as significant, they might see greater merit in "stringing out" the issue of a date for a second summit. Their expectations would then be that the Administration's interest in allaying congressional budget concerns, soothing Allied anxieties over their own domestic critics of the US-Soviet arms dialogue, and countering potential Third World susceptibility to Moscow's broad-ranging arms control overtures will collectively incline the Administration toward accommodating at least some Soviet concerns on the central issues of SDI, interim restraint, deep cuts, or even nuclear testing.

If the Soviets are hedging on the issue of a second summit, what then would incline them toward a "stringing out" strategy? No one issue would

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probably govern Moscow's decision. Rather, the Soviets are probably viewing the US stance on individual issues in terms of how US movement--or lack of movement--on these issue would translate into potential Soviet political opportunities to complicate the Administration's defense and arms control policies.

- The most obvious issue is SDI. There is enough evidence from [redacted] Soviet statements subsequent to the President's June letter to Gorbachev to suggest strongly that the Soviets view the President's proposal on extending the ABM Treaty as the basis for further bargaining. Ambassador Karpov in the early August experts meeting referred to possibility of finding "common ground" between Moscow's proposal for a 15-20 year extension of the Treaty and the President's seven and a half year proposal. If, however, the Soviets come to the conclusion that the US position is essentially immutable, they might opt to postpone the summit for several more months while continuing to probe potential US flexibility in Geneva and elsewhere. In keeping with such a strategy, they might even publicly revise their own proposal, reducing their proposed extension period to ten years--a time frame that has already been mentioned privately by Soviet officials as potentially acceptable to Moscow.

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- US Policy on Interim Restraint is also a key variable to Moscow. [redacted]

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the expressed US willingness to engage in a bilateral discussion of an interim regime of mutual restraint is probably an incentive to Gorbachev to come to a summit before the end of the year. At the same time, however, the Soviets might see greater opportunity in deferring a summit until after the US decision on de facto adherence to SALT II MIRVed limits sometime in the next several months. From Moscow's perspective, the near-term military consequences of US deployments in excess of this limit are marginal and the political costs to the Administration, particularly in the form of possible Congressional budgetary encumbrance of certain programs, might be viewed as more attractive political climate for Soviet meddling. Absent further US reassurances, the Soviets just might opt to "string out" the summit.

- Despite their public statements, progress on nuclear testing and INF is probably not viewed by Moscow as critical to holding a summit.

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While either could serve as the centerpiece of a summit, the Soviets clearly must recognize that the US is unlikely to agree either to fall off its position [ ] in the nuclear experts talks or to agree to a test ban any time soon. On INF, a package for a partial agreement might be conceivable for Moscow even at the cost of asymmetrical reductions in SS-20s in exchange for US systems, but the Soviets appear intent on hearing US ideas on such a package before surfacing their own.

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- Anomalous actions such as the detention of Danilooff or another US military clash with Libya are obvious potential impediments to a near-term summit. The Soviet probably did not intend the Danilooff affair to get in the way of summit preparations although they may view the emerging US public stance on Danilooff as a reflection of the maneuvers of anti-summit "hard-liners" in Washington. Espionage incidents per se would probably not stand in the way of summit preparations from Moscow's perspective. Gorbachev did not allow mutual expulsion of suspected intelligence officers to stand in the way of his October 1985 visit to France. Indeed, when queried about this at a press conference in Paris, he sought to dismiss the significance of the expulsions by noting that espionage and counter-espionage actions were an everyday part of international relations. In contrast, US-initiated action against Libya probably would lead to further postponement of a summit, but US actions in response to a Libyan-precipitated clash probably would be assessed by Moscow in terms of the scale of US retaliatory action and the rhetoric accompanying any US action. A US effort to insulate US-Soviet relations from US retaliatory actions against Libya might lead Moscow to limit its own response to propaganda denunciations while continuing with the dialogue on summit preparations.

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